

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

One Step at a Time
Peter Walks on Water
Matthew 14:22-33

KEY QUESTION

What distracts you
from focusing on Jesus?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Stay focused on Jesus.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

Being confident of this, that
he who began a good work in
you will carry it on to completion
until the day of Christ Jesus.
Philippians 1:6, NIV

MONTHLY LIFE APP

Confidence—Learning to see
yourself the way God sees you

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- MONTHLY CHALLENGE - CONFIDENCE
- **NEXT WEEK** -- : 9; C'H9; C'<J AN= %; `] [c'gmt'nà]g' Yf f gmf [] e] fl % [gd] [lā _'ā] e k'lg 'atZY [chY [ck& Yf\ Ydkg \dkjā mē _ZY [c'hY [ck'L@AK'O==C=F <

WORSHIP:

- THE BEST IS YET TO COME
- GOOD GRACE

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

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LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter

WORSHIP LEADER: "I'm so glad that we're all here to worship God together. Every day, we can choose to put our focus on Him. We can look to Him and know that He's with us every step of the way. Sing this with me.

AUDIO: THE BEST IS YET TO COME

AUDIO: GOOD GRACE

Host enters . . .

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

OPENER

HOST: "Hey everyone! So good to see you here today! We are about to get things started with a game to get you in the groove, literally. How is your sense of rhythm? Well, we're about to find out!"

NOTE: This game will work best if it's led by someone who can create and keep rhythms.

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"In just a second, I'll make a rhythm with my hands and feet—hand claps, foot stomps, snaps, that sorta thing. We'll start out pretty simple and get more complicated as we go. Your challenge? Stay focused and copy the rhythm! Don't lose the beat. If you do, you'll need to sit out. The winner will be the last person still making a beat!"

Leader begins with a simple rhythm of claps to get everyone involved. Add in different beats, then stomps, then snaps. Speed up to make it more difficult. Keep encouraging them to "Stay focused!" Announce a winner.

Ideas for Rhythm Combinations:

- 1. Clap, Stomp, Snap, Stomp, Clap, Snap*
- 2. Stomp, Stomp, Snap, Clap, Snap, Clap, Stomp*
- 3. Clap, Clap, Clap, Snap, Stomp, Stomp, Snap, Clap*
- 4. Snap, Stomp, Snap, Stomp, Clap, Stomp, Clap*
- 5. Snap, Clap, Stomp, Stomp, Snap, Snap, Clap*
- 6. Combine 1 and 2*
- 7. Combine 3 and 4*
- 8. Combine 4 and 5*
- 9. Combine 1, 2 and 3*
- 10. Combine 3, 4, and 5*

"(After the game) Okay, take a breather! That was some intense focusing. You all did great!"

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: "Good to see you all. July is already off to a great start! As we jump in, I need a volunteer to help me out!"

Communicator calls up a volunteer.

"Good to see you. Really quick, can you just keep this balloon up in the air without letting it drop to the floor?"

Volunteer starts hitting balloon.

While the volunteer focuses on keeping the balloon up in the air, the Communicator asks a series of distracting questions. When the volunteer walks away to get the balloon, say things like, "Woah hold on, I'm still talking to you!" Ask questions like the following (but feel free to base them on the volunteer you chose).

"So, how's your summer going? What have you been up to? What do you think about the weather? Do you like swimming? What's your favorite place to swim? Who's your best friend? What do you like to do for fun? Do you have a hobby? What's your hobby?"

(After the volunteer has dropped the balloon or after a while of asking questions) OK, one more question. Is it hard focusing when I'm asking all these questions?"

Volunteer answers and then sits down.

"Of course, it is! Let's be honest. This game can be a lot like life. Life is full of distractions."

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: "We need to study, but we get distracted by a TV show. We need to practice for a dance or sport, but we get distracted by a video game. We need to focus on cleaning up our rooms, but we end up distracted with book we found or LEGO® set we forgot about. I'm sure all sorts of moments come to mind when you need to focus but keep getting distracted. But have you ever thought about focusing and being distracted when it comes to following Jesus?"

"That's an interesting thought, huh? How do you focus on following Jesus? And if you can, what sorts of things would distract you anyway? Well, this summer as we're thinking about confidence and pressing play on our relationship with Jesus, these are important questions for us to consider. Thankfully, we have some moments recorded for us in the Bible that can help."

PRELUDE

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TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “Let’s check out a particular moment from the New Testament of our Bible, in the section of books we call the Gospels. The Gospels were written by four guys who wanted to make sure people knew the story of Jesus . . . about His life, ministry, death and resurrection.”

“Now, as many of you know, Jesus called several people to be His close followers. We call these followers . . . *(prompt for response)* disciples! That’s right. A disciple is someone who follows the teacher and wants to know what they know and live like they live. They want to be like them! And although there were many people who followed Jesus, He chose twelve close disciples who followed Him everywhere He went. The disciples ended up in some pretty amazing situations!”

“At the start of this story, Jesus and the disciples had just heard some pretty terrible news. John the Baptist, Jesus’ cousin and friend, had been killed by King Herod. Jesus went off to be alone, but that didn’t last long. Thousands of people showed up wanting to hear Jesus teach. Feeling compassion for the people, Jesus healed those who were sick and miraculously fed the crowds bread and fish when they got hungry. After that, Jesus, once again, tried to get that alone time. He sent His disciples in a boat ahead of Him.

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:22 (NirV) and read.

“*Right away Jesus made the disciples get into the boat. He had them go on ahead of him to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Then he sent the crowd away.*”

“He sent the disciples across the lake. As for Jesus?”

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:23 (NirV) and read.

“*After he had sent them away, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone.*”

“It is pretty cool to see that even Jesus needed time by Himself to pray. Now, as Jesus was praying, the disciples were struggling! Out on the water, the wind and the waves were making it a very slow trip . . .”

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:24-25 (NirV) and read.

“*The boat was already a long way from land. It was being pounded by the waves because the wind was blowing against it. Shortly before dawn, Jesus went out to the disciples. He walked on the lake.*”

“Wait. Did you catch that? Jesus went out to check on the disciples, but He didn’t take a boat. Nope. He WALKED across the lake! Can you imagine the reaction of the disciples? Well, you don’t have to imagine it! Matthew records it for us.”

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:26-27 (NirV) and read.

“*They saw him walking on the lake and were terrified. “It’s a ghost!” they said. And they cried out in fear.’ The disciples were spooked! They thought Jesus was a ghost coming to sink the boat or something! But immediately, Jesus spoke to them in a voice they had heard many times before. Right away Jesus called out to them, “Be brave! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”*”

"Now, if the story is strange to you already, it is about to get even more wild. Peter, one of the most outspoken disciples, responded in the most unpredictable way to Jesus."

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:28 (NirV) and read.

"“Lord, is it you?” Peter asked. “If it is, tell me to come to you on the water.”““

"What? Everyone else was probably hiding under their seats, but here was Peter asking for an invitation to get OUT of the boat! Why? Because he saw Jesus walking on water, and now he wanted to walk on water. He wanted to be like his teacher! It may not make sense to us, but it made perfect sense to Peter!"

"I expect that Jesus would have said something like, 'Silly Peter, this is only for level five masters. You stay in the boat with the rest of them. But you know what Jesus said? He said: 'Come.' And you know what was even more wild? Peter did it. He stepped out of the boat!"

"But then, something happened."

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:29b-30 (NirV) and read.

"“So Peter got out of the boat. He walked on the water toward Jesus. But when Peter saw the wind, he was afraid. He began to sink. He cried out, “Lord! Save me!”““

"Alright, let's pause on the story for a moment. Don't worry—Peter will be okay. But I have a question for you to think about: why did Peter start to sink?"

Pause for responses—prompt with “What changed?” or “What did he see?”

"Right, he saw the crashing waves, and he heard the sound of the terrible wind. I'd guess that all of the sudden he realized what he was doing and what he shouldn't have the ability to do. His eyes, which had been on Jesus, were now on all of the distractions around him."

"Maybe you've never thought about it like this before, but if you have put your faith in Jesus, if you are a follower of Jesus, you are a disciple. It is our goal to focus on Jesus and follow Him. Sometimes, we can think that following Jesus is simply like this . . ."

SLIDE: ROAD 1: DESERTED ROAD

"We are just following Jesus with not a single distraction around us. It is just a simple road, clear directions, and we always know which way to go. Sounds nice, right?"

"The reality, thought, is that following Jesus can sometimes feel more like this . . ."

SLIDE: ROAD 2: BUSY ROAD

"Jesus makes His way known to us, but we find so many distractions along the way. Life is full of so many other things calling for our attention and competing for our focus. If we're not careful, we can find ourselves losing sight of the road we were on."

"Take a moment to discuss this with your neighbor . . ."

SLIDE: ROAD 3: SPLIT SCREEN OF BUSY/DESERTED ROAD

"How is following Jesus more like this (points to busy road) and less like this (point to the deserted road)? What are some of the distractions that compete for our attention?"

Give groups time to discuss. After a few minutes, ask for groups to share some of the examples they discussed.

"Those are some great examples! Now, let's go back to the story. What do you think Jesus did when He saw Peter start to sink because he was focused on the waves and wind? Left him to fend for himself? Made him feel pretty bad about himself? Check it out . . ."

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:31a (NIRV) and read.

"Right away Jesus reached out his hand and caught him."

"Did you catch those first two words? RIGHT AWAY. Right away, Jesus reached out and caught Peter. He was there for him when he was overwhelmed and everything else got the best of him. And then He reminded Peter of something important.

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:31b (NIRV) and read.

"Your faith is so small!" he said. "Why did you doubt me?"

"Jesus reminded Peter why he sunk in the first place. Peter lost focus on what was most important. The wind and waves seemed so powerful that they made him forget who is MOST powerful. What was next to him, made Peter forget what was right in front of him."

"And sometimes we need other people to remind us of what is true."

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:32-33 (NIRV) and read.

"When they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those in the boat worshiped Jesus. They said, 'You really are the Son of God!'"

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: "You know what's interesting? Sometimes we hear this story and start to think negatively of Peter. We might even think we could do better. But think about this: Peter must have been so focused on Jesus to be willing to step out of the boat in the first place!"

"I don't think there are a lot of people who would have done what he did. I mean, of the 12 disciples, he was the *only* one we see out there, right? He only began to struggle when he lost sight of Jesus and focused on the challenges around him."

"Now, we probably aren't stepping out of any boats, but we are still trying to follow Jesus. And following Jesus can be hard at times. Remember, it is not like that simple road in the middle of nowhere."

"We are always surrounded by challenges and distractions. Our family might have trouble getting along. Or maybe someone we love gets sick. Or something doesn't go the way we expected. These are real situations that can take our focus away from Jesus. And when we focus on them, we feel like we are starting to sink. But remember, Jesus is there, waiting with open arms. And like the disciples acknowledged when He got back in the boat, Jesus really is the Son of God. He can be trusted, no matter what."

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "Today as you head to Small Group, think about this question:

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION SLIDE

"What distracts you from focusing on Jesus? What else can you think of that we discussed earlier? Was anything shared with the whole group that really connected with you? You'll have chance to talk with your Small Group about of this, so don't worry if you can't think of something off the top of your head. Before you head out, let's pray and thank Jesus that we can be confident and trust Him with our whole life."

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP